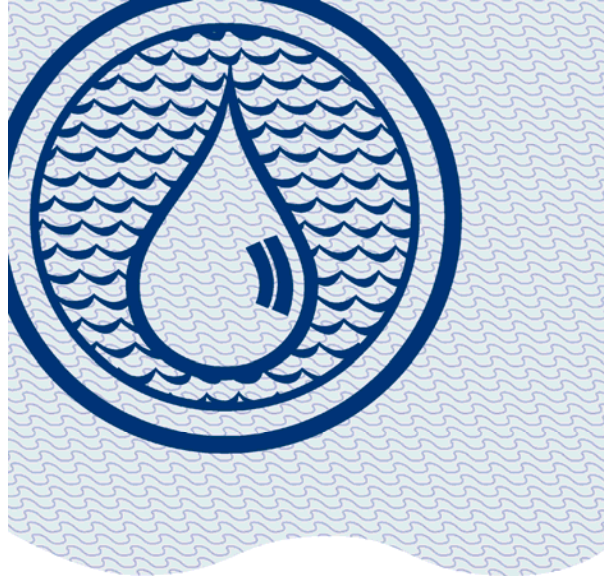


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## Coliform Distribution System Sampling Procedure

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DOH 331-225  
(Revised)



## Coliform Sampling Procedure

We recommend that you use the  
following steps when collecting your  
sample. If instructions from your  
laboratory are different, please call us  
for clarification.

Most sample kits contain a:

- Sample bottle
- Lab slip
- Rubber band

### Step One

Follow your Coliform Monitoring  
Plan to collect routine and repeat  
samples from sites throughout the  
distribution system.

Sample taps should represent the  
water in your distribution system.  
Avoid poor sample sites such as  
swivel faucets, hot and cold mixing  
faucets (with a single lever), leaky or  
spraying faucets, drinking fountains,  
janitorial sinks, frost-free hose bibs,  
and faucets below or near ground  
level.

### Step Two

Remove any attachments from  
the faucet, including aerators,  
screens, washers, hoses, and  
water filters. If you choose to  
disinfect the sample site prior to  
sample collection, be sure to  
flush thoroughly to remove all  
disinfectant.



### Step Three

Turn on the cold water only and  
let it run with a steady stream for  
at least five minutes. Before  
collecting the sample, turn the  
water down to a thin stream  
(about the width of a pencil), then  
let the water run one minute. If  
the system is chlorinated,  
measure the free chlorine residual  
and note the measurement on the  
lab slip.



**Water conservation tip**  
You can save the flushed water in a bucket for later use.

## Step Four

There may be some liquid or powder in the sample bottle to neutralize chlorine. Do not rinse it out.

## Step Five

To avoid contamination while taking the sample, hold the bottle near the bottom with one hand, hold the top of the cap with the other, and then unscrew the cap.

**Do not** set the cap down, touch any part of the cap that touches the bottle, or let anything touch the rim of the bottle or the inside of the cap.



## Step Six

Hold the bottle under the stream of water. Be careful not to let the bottle touch the sample tap. Fill the bottle to the neck or indicated fill line, but do not allow it to overflow. Remove the bottle from the water flow and replace the cap.

## Step Seven

Complete the lab slip. If there was anything unusual about the sample collection, note it on the lab slip.



Laboratory forms vary. It is important to include at least the following information:

- Water system ID number
- Water system name
- Collection date and time
- Type of sample (check ONLY ONE Type: Routine, Repeat, Raw, or For Information Only)
- Sample location (street address or other location identifier)
- System type (Group A or B)

## Step Eight

Secure the lab slip to the bottle with the rubber band. Deliver the sample to a certified lab or to a designated drop-off location for the lab as soon as possible. Lab analysis must begin within 30 hours of sample collection.

## For more information

If you have questions about coliform sampling collection procedures, call our regional office:

**Eastern Region**  
Spokane Valley  
(509) 329-2100

**Northwest Region**  
Kent  
(253) 395-6750

**Southwest Region**  
Tumwater  
(360) 236-3030